

## The Visitant,

### THE LORD'S SUPPER.

CONTINUED.

THE institution of the Lord's Supper, was attended with interesting circumstances. The Apostle Paul speaking concerning this ordinance, says, "*I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you.*" This circumstance is often introduced, and sometimes in the most energetic terms.

"I certify you brethren," says the apostle in his epistle to the Galatians, "that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it; And profited in the Jews religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mothers womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then, after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days, But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God I lye not."

The peculiar doctrines of our holy religion, coming in view, in another correspondence, he insists, "By which also ye are saved, If ye keep in memory what I preached unto you,

to sustain thee: So he arose, and went to Zarephath: and when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks; and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. And as she was going to fetch *it*, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand. And she said, *As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die.* And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go *and* do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring *it* unto me, and after make for thee and thy son: For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day *that* the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth. And she went, and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and her house, did eat *many* days. *And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah.*" This widow felt for the prophet, she obeyed the call of humanity, and prospered in her obedience. He was thirsty, she gave him drink; he was hungry, she gave him bread: it was all she had; but she was assured that more should be provided; she did not doubt, and her faith was highly rewarded: the blessing of God rested on her store, her meal wasted not, neither did her cruse of oil fail. Such the blessing on this ordinance, it is an unfailing source of refreshment and nourishment to the Israel of God during their sojourning in this dry and barren wilderness.

Our Lord's compassion, when the multitude had attended him for some days, and had no supply of food, but were likely to suffer, before they could reach their homes, or procure a supply from the neighbouring villages; and the entertainment which he provided for them, may now be remembered with advantage, "Jesus lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? (And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.) Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little. One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, There is a lad here, which hath five barley-loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many? And



Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. Therefore they gathered *them* together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley-loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten. Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, this is of a truth that Prophet who should come into the world." Five loaves and two small fishes were by no means adequate to the present exigency; but they multiplied in the Creator's hand so exceedingly, that the vast assembly were not only abundantly satisfied, but fragments remained in a much greater quantity than the whole provision at first: through the same power, the ordinance of the supper multiplies its benefits, among thousand thousands, and ten times ten thousand in every age and of every nation.

By this more than any other ordinance shall the Redeemer's name endure for ever—shall his name be continued as long as the sun; men shall be blessed in him, and all nations shall call him blessed.

On a memorable occasion our Saviour expressed great confidence in his father, "Father I thank thee that thou hast heard me, and I know that thou hearest me always." If all his prayers be effectual, his prayer on this solemn occasion, is not in vain. Ordinances or creatures are to us what God is pleased to make them. The waters of Jordan possessed no virtue to cure Naaman of his leprosy, more than the waters of Abana and Pharpar rivers of Damascus: the clay, with which our Saviour anointed the eyes of a man blind from his birth, was more likely to put out the eyes of one who saw, than to restore sight to one who did not see: the pool of Bethesda, cannot be supposed to have possessed intrinsic virtue radically to cure disorders of long standing and great inveteracy. God operates in the use of means; ineffectual in themselves, he gives them efficacy: but no means are necessary: let him speak it is done: the intervention of this or the other mean is for the trial of our faith. It is presumptuous to dispute. Angels dispute not. What dost thou? Is a demand which no creature has a right to make. The ordinance of the supper

is a mean of grace, and a source of refreshment: separated from a divine blessing neither grace nor refreshment can be expected; but it is attended with a blessing, whereby it becomes a strengthening meal, and a reviving cordial.

The seventy disciples having executed their commission, gave to their great master a cheering account of their uncommon success. "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold I give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven. In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is but the Father; and who the Father is but the Son, and *he* to whom the Son will reveal *him*." Did the success of the seventy disciples in a circuit of a few weeks, through a confined region give our Lord such satisfaction, what must have been his satisfaction, at the prospect of the infinitely greater success of this ordinance, strengthening, comforting, and building up his church, at all times, and among all nations.

*Do this* in remembrance of me. I know nothing more binding than a divine command. If it forbids, it is hazardous to venture upon what is forbidden: If it commands, what blessings do the disobedient forfeit! what penalties do they incur! Thou shalt not eat of that tree, said God to Adam, neither shalt thou touch it, for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. Eating or not eating, was a common action in itself neither good nor evil, before the prohibition it was so, not afterwards, then to eat involved in it a crime the most atrocious and provoking. Man, by that act, joined rebel angels, and stood exposed to the same punishment. The consequence was dreadful. What terror! what disgrace! What ruin!

The Syrian chief, was commanded by the prophet, "Go wash in Jordan seven times, and thou shalt be clean. But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand and call



on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. *Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them and be clean?* So he turned, and went away in a rage." It was well that his servants were more considerate than their master; they had weighed the matter, and by their prudent counsel brought him to a more humble and obedient disposition, otherwise, he must have laboured to the end of life, under a loathsome and incurable disease. They "came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee *do some* great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash and be clean? Then went he down and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

The weight of a divine command is not felt, for were it felt, no man, in one instance, could venture on any act of disobedience. The same authority which enjoins, "Honour thy father and mother; also enjoins, *take, eat, drink ye all of it, this do:*" not to honour a parent is monstrous; more so not to honour the Saviour; from the one we receive a natural life; from the other a spiritual life; gratitude as well as duty enforce obedience.

The observation of the apostle James with respect to loving one another applies fully on this subject, "If ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all. For he that said, do not commit adultery, also said, do not kill. Now, If thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill thou art become a transgressor of the law."

In the spirit of this passage, and as an-inference from it, I must insist, he who said "do justly," also said, "take, eat, this do in remembrance of me:" now, if thou doest justly, but neglectest to take and eat in remembrance of Christ, thou art a transgressor of the law.

This duty is binding upon all the members of the christian church in general, and upon each member in particular; infants initiated in infancy into the church, are under the inspection of the church, and subjected to her authority; every duty binding upon such, according to their capacity, is binding upon them; when therefore they attain the years of discretion; when they can discern the nature of this ordinance;

when their habits are steady : when they believe, when they repent, when they bring forth fruits meet for repentance ; participating of this ordinance is not only their privilege, but a duty, which without base ingratitude, cannot by any one of them be neglected. By a principle, operating since the days of Abraham, in consequence of the covenant established with him, the children of the members of the visible church, have a birth-right in the church ; and their right, by the express command of God, is to be acknowledged, applying to them the initiating rite : but they despise this privilege, who attaining mature years, do not seek admission to the holy table. A connection with the church, and the privileges belonging to its members are not estimated as they ought. The church is a body perfectly distinct from the world. In the church the knowledge, the worship and the service of God are perpetuated from age to age. Its members are sons of God, and his witnesses on earth. God stands to them in a covenant relation ; and to them the promises are given. The church universal honours God, and all his commands they observe ; he honours them who honour him, and in keeping his commands they find a great reward. Such stand on certain ground, and attain the greatest confidence. Many Jews, on the day of pentecost, to the amount of three thousand, believed the glad tidings published in their hearing : and believing were admitted to the church. The happy consequence is evident, “ And they continued stedfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

And fear came upon every soul : and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common ; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all *men*, as every man had need. And they continued daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart ; praising God.” The graces which adorn the christian character were here seen in lively exercise ; their views of the truth were more distinct and impressive : the world lost its influence over them : how they love one another ! what delight in religious services ! how sweet the common provisions of providence ! they receive them with increasing thankfulness, as gifts of God. They imbibe the spirit of celestials, and participate in their joys which they find to be full and lasting. Such the advantage of complying with the commands of God, who commands nothing but what is for our advantage.



Was the ordinance of the supper instituted by Christ himself during his personal ministration? was it the subject of an express revelation, to the apostle Paul, years after Christ's ascension into heaven, and the effusion of the Holy Ghost on the day of pentecost? was the frequent observance enjoined upon the church, not at one period only, but through every succeeding period, until Christ's second coming? Is not the ordinance of high importance?—of universal obligation?—of a perpetuity equal to the perpetuity of the earth itself?—

Does the head of the church speak? does the King of Zion proclaim his decree?—is the decree absolute and express?—He who hath an ear to hear let him hear. It is rebellion to refuse: It is rejecting the counsel of God against yourselves, and accounting yourselves unworthy of eternal life.

Did the grateful Israelite, celebrate year after year continually, his deliverance from the sword of the destroying angel? And shall not this afford matter of condemnation against the ungrateful christian, who neglects to celebrate a greater deliverance from sin and death? Sinking in the mirey clay, more oppressed and more afflicted than tongue can tell, or heart conceive, did the Saviour institute this ordinance, commanding with his last breath, that it should be observed by all the churches: disobeying a command from such lips, and in such circumstances, is inexcusable; it is treading under foot the Son of God, it is accounting his blood an unholy thing, and doing despite to the spirit of his grace.

You are guilty; but the sacrifice has been offered up which expiates guilt: you are so degenerate as to be incapable of serving God, or enjoying communion with him; but in consequence of Christ's death, the spirit is given to enlighten and invigorate—to sanctify and perfect your nature: you have forfeited life and immortality; but having risen from the dead, Christ has begotten you again to a lively hope. This ordinance is not intended for angels; but for men: not for spirits made perfect; but for spirits struggling with a body of sin and death: not for the righteous; but for sinners who repent: not for those who have a righteousness of their own in which they boast; but for those who conscious of their guilt, submit to the righteousness which is of God by faith, views at this service open, which afford hope, consolation and triumph. Water is not more refreshing to the thirsty; nor bread to the hungry. Follow the foot steps of the flock, you

shall arrive at the green pastures, and the quiet waters : you shall sit down under the Redeemer's shadow and experience great delight : you shall eat his fruit and find it sweet to your taste.



AN

**ADDRESS,**

PREPARED AT THE DESIRE OF THE BIBLE SOCIETY  
OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, AT THEIR FIRST  
MEETING, AT WASHINGTON, ON THE 17TH OF APRIL,  
EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND FOURTEEN.

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*O Thou ! whose word from solid darkness struck  
That spark, the sun, strike wisdom from my soul !*

YOUNG.

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THE scriptures are the great means used by God for the reformation of the world. Whence their origin, or how they came into our possession, are inquiries of the first importance. When Messiah appeared on earth, the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand ; but before it could commence it was necessary that he should die; and rising again from the dead, should sit down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. Things were then in a train to introduce changes in the church advantageous, in a high degree, to men of that and of every succeeding age. John the Baptist roused the nation to repentance and to amendment of life ; his ministry was followed by the ministry of Jesus, who spoke as no man had ever spoken, who wrought astonishing miracles, particularly, who from among his disciples selected *twelve*, whom he ordained, “ *that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach.*” When the selection now made—their present preparation—and future work are known, the evidence may with more effect be produced, that the scriptures, which they were inspired to write, contain an unerring rule of faith and manners.

In the selection now made *Simon*, called also *Peter*, a rock, expressive of his possessing a firm and resolute mind, is *first* mentioned, with his brother *Andrew*. Let it not be supposed

because Peter is first mentioned, that he was destined to be chief. This was not intimated by our Lord, it was never claimed by Peter; nor acknowledged by any of the twelve. Contentions about superiority they often had, which their Lord always silenced, declaring that they *were brethren*, on an equality, having one master only, their master in heaven.

*James and John*, the sons of Zebedee, were men of ardent minds, which was the occasion of their being called Boanerges, or sons of thunder. These were the disciples who wished to call for fire from heaven to consume the inhospitable Samaritans; who prevailed with their mother to intercede that they might sit, the one on the right hand the other on the left, in Christ's Kingdom. John was peculiarly susceptible of friendship; he loved his Lord with a glowing affection, and the affection was mutual, a circumstance which attaches to his name unfading honour. James, by the warmth of his testimony to the risen Saviour, incurred the resentment of Herod, whom, when just entering on the duties of the Apostolic office, he slew with the sword.

*Philip* was associated with *Bartholemew*, who also, as is generally supposed, had the name of Nathaniel, that Israelite, indeed, in whom there was no guile.

*Thomas* was sent out with *Matthew* the publican, the writer of one of the gospels.

In the list of the Apostles we find three sons of Alpheus, who is called Cleopas, to whom Christ appeared after his resurrection in the way to Emmaus, and to whom he was known in the breaking of bread; the wife of Alpheus was sister to the Virgin Mary, which is the reason that their sons were designated *Christ's brethren*. They were of the same name with some others in this list, but are easily discriminated from them, being of different families, and receiving additional appropriate surnames.

*James* one of the sons of Alpheus, was associated with his brother *Judas*. This is that James who presided at the assembly which met at Jerusalem, to decide whether obedience to the Mosaic law was to be exacted of converts from among the Gentiles: he was of great reputation among the brethren, and wrote the epistle which bears his name. Jude or Judas, had also the name of Lebbeus, which characterizes his sincerity, very unlike the other Judas, whose conduct has rendered the name, even to a proverb, a term of reproach.

Their brother, *Simon Zelotes*, a burning and shining light,



was joined with *Judas Iscariot*, who betrayed Christ, and by that act became a fallen star, which *once* shone, but *now* shines no more.

Most of those found in this list had been fishermen: none of them were men of learning: they had no weight in society from birth, or rank, or peculiar natural endowments; but they were sincere, honest men, whose minds were exercised with religion: some of them had been the disciples of John the Baptist; they had all attended our Lord from his entering on his public ministrations. They believed him to be the Messiah, but, like their countrymen, they supposed that the kingdom which he was about to erect was of this world. Their prejudices were deeply rooted. For this high office to which they were called, they were at present all totally unqualified; but *a preparatory state* immediately commenced. "He ordained them that they *might be with him*."

As his witnesses to the world to which they were now called, it became necessary that they should be intimately acquainted with his private and public life. From this moment they were his family: they subsisted on a common stock; they went where he went, and lodged where he lodged: he was among them as a father among his children. They were the companions of his retirement, and by his unreserved conduct encouraged to be perfectly at ease in his presence. They knew his views and beheld his conduct at those moments, when, withdrawn from the world, the real character appears in its native beauty, or native deformity. The human character cannot bear such inspection. The infirmity, even of the best, is then too apparent; hence the proverb, founded on experience, that familiarity breeds contempt. But to Christ's character no blemish could be attached; it was free from spot. He alone, of all who ever dwelt on earth, was without sin. In their hearing, he taught the people; and they could accurately examine every circumstance attending the miracles which he wrought. They were about him when his enemies intruded upon his retirement in the garden of Gethsemane. Peter was present at his trial before Caiaphas, the high priest. John stood by the cross when he expired. It was well known to them all, that he had been buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. He was seen by them frequently after his resurrection, sometimes apart, and sometimes together; and meeting them for the last time at Jerusalem, he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifted up his hands and blessed them;

and whilst he blessed them, he was parted from them, and a cloud received him out of their sight.

Nothing, in his appearance or private conversation, in his public instructions or public conduct, favoured the dream of *temporal dominion*. He was more destitute than the foxes which have holes, and the birds of the air which have nests. Far from courting the favour of the great, by severe, though just reproof, he made them his enemies. The multitude would have raised him to the throne, but he escaped from them. He declared that his kingdom was not of this world, and was ever urging it upon his disciples to deny themselves and to take up the cross. Let them rise by becoming servants of all. They must suffer that they may triumph; die that they may live; give up possessions on earth, that they may enjoy possessions in heaven. For the moment, all was inexplicable to the Apostles—beyond their comprehension—a worm at the root of their worldly advancement. When he died they were in despair: When he rose again they were in hopes that now he would take into his hand the rein of government. But he bore with them, well knowing that the means used to correct their prejudices would soon be effectual. The axe, by repeated strokes, had destroyed one root after another; one stroke more, the tree shall fall, and no shoot remain to endanger its pernicious growth.

The apostles were ordained, not only that they might be *with him*, but also that “*he might send them forth to preach.*” This, like the other, was a *preparatory step* to qualify them for their future work.

They were sent out to call the nation to repentance and amendment; to baptize those who were penitent; and to publish the glad tidings that Messiah, whose appearance was expected, and to whom they were indebted for pardon and acceptance, would immediately be revealed. The commission which they now received was similar to the commission under which John the Baptist acted. They occupied the ground from which John by his confinement had been withdrawn. It was a continuance of the voice from the wilderness—*prepare ye the way of the Lord*. Be humble and penitent, that you may welcome Messiah when he comes, and participate in the privileges enjoyed by his subjects. Executing this commission, how must the scheme of worldly grandeur have appeared? Had a temporal kingdom been intended, would they not have been commissioned to rouse the



nation to arms, to erect military standards, to offer great honours, extensive possessions, the spoil of conquered foes? Is it the policy of earthly potentates to proclaim the malignity of sin, the beauty of holiness, the reign of peace? Slow as the apostle's were of heart to believe, it must often have occurred to them, this mission does not favour our views, nor does it form men to bloodshed and to spoil. If their hearts be broken, and spirits brought low, as guilty, rebellious, perishing creatures; the pageantry of power, of honour, and wealth, must lose its importance, and appear the vainest and most empty things imaginable. Such can be cheered by the voice of mercy only, promising pardon, regenerating influences, the restoration of life and immortality; forfeited by disobedience.

We know not that the apostles were sent out more than once, whilst their Lord continued among them on earth. It was a first essay in public speaking, and in the exercise of those miraculous powers with which they were invested. It was also one among many means used to destroy the false expectation which they, in common with their countrymen, entertained of Messiah's character and government.

It was among the last acts of Christ, after his resurrection, before he ascended to heaven, to give his apostles that commission for the execution of which so much pains had been taken to prepare them. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations; *convert* them; let the disciples of Moses become disciples of Christ; let idolators renounce their false gods and false mediators; and acknowledge one God and one Mediator. Being converted, *Baptize* them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" initiating them by this rite into the christian church. Being baptized, *Teach* them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. Let no difficulty and no danger deter you. Lo! I am with you always even unto the end of the world."—Such their commission; but it was not meant that it should be immediately acted upon; before they could convert the nations, powers to effect this purpose must first be communicated from above: let them wait at Jerusalem, until these powers were communicated.

Until now, and, indeed, at this moment, and for a short period after, they were influenced by *the dream of secular dominion*; as is evident from the inquiry, "Lord, wilt thou,

at this time, restore again the kingdom to Israel?" He waved all discussion on a subject which they could not yet bear, well knowing that they should immediately awake from their dream, and be no longer deceived. Their present duty was to wait; any step under existing circumstances was likely to be a false step. Such, according to some, was the choice of an apostle in the place of Judas; which act, they suppose, our Lord himself set aside, supplying the deficiency by calling Saul of Tarsus to the apostleship.

The period approached when no mistake of any kind, in executing their office, was possible; but they became the unerring guides of faith and manners to men of that and every succeeding age. On the day of Pentecost "they were all, with one accord, in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance."

It is not easy to explain, or even to conceive the change now effected in the minds of the apostles. Dark before—all was now light. Day succeeded night. Their capacities were improved; and powers, not possessed before, began to be exerted. Their knowledge of divine subjects was perfect; and on these subjects they could speak fluently, and in any tongue known among men.

Adam was called into existence in a state of maturity, with such discernment and knowledge as few of his descendants attain after a life of experience and study. As the birds and beasts passed in review before him, immediately he perceived their distinguishing qualities, and gave each an appropriate name, descriptive of its character. Ancient prophets were conversant with what then took place at a distance, or should take place in the remotest ages, although vastly different from what was known to them, either from experience or information. These instances show the great power of God, who can at any time give his creatures any degree of discernment on any subject; and in an instant capacitate them for any service. This power he was pleased, at this eventful period, to exert. The apostles were no longer ignorant, and slow of heart to believe; erring and attached to worldly schemes. In a moment, they were fully instructed, and root-



ed in the faith. They could neither err, nor lead others into an error. From being carnal, they became spiritual. They had a clear discernment of the mysteries contained in the scriptures : what they had seen, and what they had heard, when attending Christ, were remembered and understood : the design of John's ministry, and of the ministry which they had hitherto executed, was no longer mistaken ; they were made fully acquainted with the person and character, the offices and government of their once crucified, but now exalted Lord. They were perfectly prepared to execute the work to which they had been called ; and they did execute it with resolution and success—laying the foundation of a spiritual kingdom which has prevailed ever since, against incessant attacks of hostile powers from earth and hell ; and shall prevail to the end of time.

The *selection of the apostles* was the result of infinite wisdom ; what in this, at first view, appears most exceptionable, ceases to be so when better understood.

*Twelve* was the number ; but why twelve ? Even this was significant ; it reminds us of the twelve tribes of Israel, forcing on the mind a conviction, that a plan had early been formed, to execute which, the former dispensation had only been preparatory ; and assuring us, that the issue shall present a work, in which the perfections of the Godhead shall be gloriously displayed.

But why was *Judas* one of the twelve—a *deceitful, worldly, false-hearted* man ? His appearance was in his favour. He professed for Christ the same attachment as the rest did ; and having been with him from the beginning, was every way capable to bear testimony of what he had seen and heard. I see no reason to question his belief that Jesus was the Messiah. Nay, this belief urged him to the step, which has marked his name with infamy. In common with his brethren, he expected that Christ would soon declare himself to be a *temporal prince* ; he became impatient at the delay, and by this act meant to extort that declaration which he knew would reconcile him to the rulers of the nation ; when, he imagined, it would be no difficult matter to make his peace with his master, and to seize those honours after which he so ardently panted. Finding that Christ was determined to yield himself to his enemies, and to die, his scheme failed. In agony of mind he gave a testimony to the innocency of Christ ; at a moment, too, when, could he have discovered any deceit, it

would have eased his own mind, and conciliated the favour of his countrymen. But he had no discoveries of that kind to make; all he had seen, and all he had heard, excited veneration. His testimony was the same as the testimony of the rest; and being now the testimony of an enemy, leaves an impression in favour of Christ, which has always been, and still is, strongly felt.

But when the apostles had just entered on their work, why should *James*, than whom was none more attached to his master, nor did any of them possess a more ardent mind—why should he be slain by the sword of Herod? In the death of James, the apostles were made sensible that their office did not exempt them from death; let them brave suffering and death; it will give additional weight to their testimony. They were, indeed, choice spirits, whom attachment to their master's cause rendered regardless of ease, of liberty, or life. Such a spirit, excited and strengthened by the Spirit of the Living God, pressed through opposition, and triumphed even in death itself.

An objection lies against all the apostles, which has often been urged; they possessed nothing acknowledged by men to be wise or noble. They were destitute of power, or weight of character. They were held in contempt as the dregs of society, and offscouring of all things. This very circumstance was so overruled as to promote the success of the gospel, and to display its intrinsic value. They were not sent to teach the things of men, nor to prevail through human policy. These were the servants of God, wise through his wisdom, and strong through his strength. Such instruments, carrying such a work into complete effect, discovers the doing of the Lord, which is wondrous in our eyes.

An *apostle* was an *extraordinary officer* in the church. The office commenced and ended with the individual. He had no successor, and could have none. He was commissioned to lay the foundation of the christian church, and to leave a complete system of faith and manners binding, through every succeeding age, upon the consciences of all men.

The testimony which the apostles bore, the doctrines which they taught, and the precepts which they inculcated, are of the utmost importance to be known. Man is a guilty, ignorant, rebellious creature. But the blood of Christ expiates human guilt; his doctrine dispels the clouds of ignorance; his precepts reduce the rebellious to submissive conduct. To



a creature capable of knowing, serving, and enjoying God; but who, through his own folly, has lost both the inclination and capacity for that in which his safety and happiness consist; a system which restores him to his original standing must, to him, be every thing. It is eyes to the blind, and ears to the deaf. It is a tongue to the dumb, and feet to the lame. It is health to the sick, and life to the dead.

But how are we made acquainted with the testimony which the apostles bore, with what they taught, and with what they commanded? By *tradition*? This is an impure source, receiving many polluted streams, which soon render the waters flowing in this channel unfit for use. God, foreseeing this, directed the apostles to commit to writing a complete system, the pure water of life, which they offer men of every age, and of every nation, for their refreshment. From the *Four Gospels*, and the *Acts of the Apostles*; from their *Epistles*, private and public, directed to individual churches, or to the church in general; and from the *Revelation of John*, we may learn all that is necessary for us to know, or for us to practise. These, with the *writings of Moses and the prophets*, are a treasure of more value than tongue can tell, or heart conceive. These writings are parts of one whole; they throw light upon one another, and together are able to make men wise unto salvation.

The moment these guides forsake us, we find ourselves on the dark mountains, where we stumble and fall; all is uncertainty and danger. But in reading the scriptures, meridian light falls upon our path; the heart rejoices, and the eyes are enlightened; men learn to fear God, and to keep his commandments; they become sensible of their errors, and are afraid of secret sins; they are warned, and sin has no dominion over them. From the benefit which they derive from the scriptures, it is of more value to them than gold, yea, much fine gold; it is sweeter than honey, and the honey comb.

Instances might be multiplied to show how effectually the word of God has purified the hearts and lives of men, and fortified them against change, against danger, against the attacks of even the king of terrors himself. Two I shall select.

Mrs. Tooley, of London, was bred up in the lap of ease and affluence. Her education, and the example continually before her eyes, either concealed the truth, or placed it in a

light calculated to excite disgust. At an early period she was left in full possession of a great estate. Her appearance was gay and brilliant. She frequented all places of amusement, and was twirled round in a giddy circle. Soon she exhausted all the sources of worldly pleasure, but she was not happy. She sought happiness, but happiness fled from her. At Bath, being indisposed, she sent for a physician, who was not only skilled in his profession, but a man of piety. He discovered the seat of her disease to be in *the mind*, not in *the body*. He recommended her to read. She had read all the plays, and romances, and books of taste then in vogue ;—but there was a book which she had not yet read, which never fails to arrest attention, and to please whilst it instructs. But what book? This the physician did not always choose to mention ; and if he did mention it, it must be considered as a mark of particular regard. Can it be procured? It can. Do favour me with the perusal. The physician assured her that this was a favour which he did not confer upon every one ; but upon her promise to read it with care, and should she not discover all its beauties on a first reading, to read it a second and a third time, she might be gratified. The promise was given, and solemnly confirmed. On his next visit, the physician presented her with a splendid copy of the New Testament. She laid it down. That book I have often seen : I could not have supposed that you would raise my curiosity merely to disappoint me. But have you ever read it? No, never. Well, I have your promise to read it carefully. She entered upon the work as a task ; but in the progress of reading, her feelings were aroused ; she saw with new eyes, and felt with a new heart. She had sought happiness where happiness was not to be found ; she now sought it in God, and found rest to her soul. From that period she was distinguished for the simplicity of her manners, the piety of her worship, and her extensive usefulness.

Doctor Leechman, of Glasgow, was raised, by his merit, to the head of the university in that place. He was familiar with the literature of Greece and Rome. His taste was thereby improved ; but for purity and hope he was indebted to a better Teacher. I invite your attention to his dying moments. The son of a nobleman, then in town, who had resided with him when attending the university, and had been under his immediate care, came to visit him. His eyes, nearly closed in death, brightened ; his countenance was placid, and



his voice rose as he spoke. He welcomed his young pupil; I am always glad to see you; and never more so than at present: I am dying, but you see me *happy*—nay, *triumphant*; for this I am indebted to that *neglected book*, pointing at a *bible* on a table near the bed—it *assures me of immortality*. The scene was uncommonly impressive. He survived only a short time, and then died in peace.

Appreciating the scripture, why go far for witnesses of its value?—I appeal to multitudes among ourselves. Has not the scripture enlightened your minds and directed your conduct? Has it not supplied a rod and staff, for your help and comfort, in your passage through this valley and shadow of death; where all around you die; where you have the sentence of death in yourselves, and may die any day, any hour, any moment. Taught by the oracles of God that the goodness and mercy which have attended you hitherto, shall attend you all your days, and that although you die, you shall live again; you lead a life, engage in worship, and participate of joys, such as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard—neither hath it entered into the heart to conceive.

It is matter of deep regret, that families who have bibles, or may have them if they please, put no value upon them: they are neither read, nor believed, nor acted upon; they are thrown aside as trash. Ah! the dust of them shall witness against such at the great day; it shall testify they—hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord; they would none of his counsel, and despised his reproof; they accounted themselves unworthy of eternal life.

Existing circumstances recall such to a sense of their duty, and to appreciate a privilege which, through ignorance or neglect, they overlook; societies are every where forming, and a society has been formed among ourselves to give circulation to the scriptures. But charity begins at home; partake of the bread with which you supply others; drink of the stream which flows in the channel which you assist in opening. It would be a miserable thing to die with famine in the midst of abundance. Take up a determined resolution to search the scriptures; let them dwell in you richly; meditate on them day and night. Pray, whilst you read, and whilst you meditate, that the spirit who inspired these writings may render them intelligible and impressive. These steps will awaken an appetite for the heavenly manna, a thirst for the water of life. You will even long to retire, that in read-

ing the scriptures you may converse with God. In this holy book he speaks to you ; his words are melody to the ear, and a cordial to the heart. Let your families partake of the benefit ; read the scriptures daily in their hearing, and by your whole influence, precept, example, and authority, attended with prayer, urge them to believe what God says, and to obey what he commands.

Associations of different kinds are formed, some to relieve the necessities of men considered as *mortals*; others to relieve their necessities considered as *immortals*. They are the friends of men, who, in their individual or social capacity, afford them information of advantage in time ; how much more are they their friends who afford them information of advantage to them in eternity. They do well who supply the bread which perisheth to the famished body ; but they do better who supply the bread which gives life, and perpetuates it forever, to the famished soul. Crowns of laurel encircle them who rescue a fellow creature from the jaws of death, or set the captive free ; but their crown shall be unfading, a crown of glory, who are instrumental in rescuing immortals from an *undying* death ; or setting the captive of sin free from a captivity which is found oppressive and ruinous through the ages of eternity. Attempts of this kind are noble ; it is their attempt who give circulation to the scripture ; that vital blood on which life depends ; God will accept their work, and find more pleasure therein than in burnt offerings and calves of a year old, than in thousands of rams, and ten thousands of rivers of oil.

The scriptures have at all times been preserved by the church with great care. Dark ages followed the overthrow of the Roman empire ; few could read or write ; books fled to the cloister. During these ages, corruption, both in doctrine and practice, deformed christianity, and tarnished its lustre. But the scriptures were in existence, which, at the reformation, were sought after, and copies thereof, printing having now been discovered, were greatly multiplied. It was yet twilight ; for two centuries the clouds which darkened the christian world were only dispersing ; Europe, during the obscure dawn, vibrated between truth and falsehood, the belief and disbelief of the gospel. The enemy, finding his time to be short, discovered great rage. Under his influence, *infidelity* gathered strength, and for a moment seemed to triumph. It bursted all bounds and deluged Europe ; nay,



reaching America, the flood pressed on, with a violence which swept all before it. But the voice of Omnipotence stopt its progress—"Thus far shalt thou come and no farther; here shall thy proud waves be stayed."

Feeble attempts have never ceased to give circulation to the scriptures; but of late a bold spirit has been roused. It has been determined to enlighten the earth by sending the messengers of peace to every part of the known world. Societies for this purpose were formed, and met encouragement. From missionary, bible societies originated. They repeat the command of God, which must be effectual, "Let there be light; and there was light." The bible has been translated into all the languages of Europe; into all the languages spoken in Asia; even the African tribes have not been overlooked. The cry is loud; it reverberates from east to west, from north to south "*Give us the bible.*"

There are regions of the earth, immensely large, and full of inhabitants, who have no sabbaths, no churches, no bibles; where myriads, in imitation of their deluded ancestors, bow before senseless idols, and practise superstitions, in the extreme, cruel, obscene, and irrational. Of *one thousand millions* who people the earth, *six hundred millions* are enveloped in *pagan darkness*; *two hundred millions* in the *delusions of Mahomet*; *three millions of Jews* dispersed among the nations, obstinately reject the Messiah; *not one hundred millions* profess the christian faith in its purity, but only as it is debased with the *gross superstition of the Greek and Roman churches*. The church has hitherto mispent her strength in disgraceful contests among her members, without one effectual attempt to save a perishing world from ruin, by the light of the truth. But she is now aroused; she has girded her loins, and is gone forth to fight the battles of the Lord. She begins to look forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.

The establishment of bible societies is a new era in the christian church. Christendom was in a languishing state, if not in a deathlike sleep; whilst the enemy was active, setting a host of infidels, in theory and practice, in array against her. The alarm was given—*the Philistines be upon thee Sampson*. The champion awoke in his strength; he has burst his fetters, and set the enemy at defiance. The full effort of christians of all denominations has been brought into operation; they feel that they are brethren, and, blushing at

the petty feuds which caused the enemy to triumph, with one heart and one hand. they unite to bear witness to the truth, and to subject the nations to the doctrine of the cross.

Nine years have elapsed since the commencement of societies in Britain to give circulation to the bible in foreign countries. The zeal of these societies has been fervent, and their success almost incredible. Their example has set Europe on fire, and the flame has spread to America. To the bible society of Philadelphia belongs the honor, in our own country, of having taken the lead in this labour of piety, whereby similar exertions, in almost every state in the union, have been excited.

In our day, nation riseth against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. What rage and conflict! what noise and tumult! what darkness and tempest! what artifice and cruelty! The sea roars and is troubled, and the mountains shake by the swelling thereof. The church raises her peaceful head amidst the storm. She looks with compassion on a rebellious race. She speaks to men of the Maker, and Governor of the world; let them acknowledge his authority, and submit to his will. He has been offended; let them hasten with the blood of atonement to his throne. His sword is unsheathed, but fury is not in him. Return to God, and he will return to you. A fire is kindled in his wrath to purify the earth. Be purified, the fire will go out. Acknowledge him who is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. He will break the bow, and cut the spear asunder, and burn the chariot in the fire. Wars shall then cease, order be restored, and safety prevail. For their learning and reproof, for their correction and instruction in righteousness, the church offers the nations the word of life. Let it be received; let it be believed; let it be acted upon. The kingdoms of this world will then become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ. The glory of the latter day shall arise; a happier state than has yet been experienced shall be experienced; all a christian can desire shall be realized. This happiness has indeed begun; the stream already flows which shall refresh and fertilize the earth.

Let the bible be circulated; it is the great mean used by God for the reformation of mankind. What else is wanting for their peace and safety in this world, or in that which is to come? Give them the bible—you give bread to the hungry, and drink to the thirsty. Give them the bible—you give health to the sick, and life to the dead. Give them the bible



—it cheers the wretched, purifies the defiled ; it seals to the guilty the pardon of sins. You thereby bless the earth, and exalt its inhabitants from the terrestrial to the celestial state.

Such the object of the bible society lately formed among us. It is a charitable institution ; the highest act of charity ; nay charities of all kinds are here concentrated in one point. Is there an individual who can withhold from us his good wishes and prayers ? No : there can be but one wish—may God give you success. There can be but one offer—“our hand, our substance, is at your call to aid your attempt ! May God grant your wish, and reward the offer you make with his blessing, enriching in life and death ; in time and eternity.” Amen.

## THE YOUNG COMMUNICANT.

*Extract of a Letter from ——— to her Aunt ———*

THE solemn act is past—I have handled the *holy emblem* of my dying Saviour. Yes, my dear aunt, it is so; by this act I have renounced all sinful lusts, and determined to serve my Saviour, and not another; and through his strength I shall be able to keep to this my determination. The Lord did truly fulfil his promise to me, that according to my day my strength should be—such feeling I never before felt, when I thought that the eyes of men and of angels; and above all the eyes of my Saviour were upon me. The church was very full; but through the strength of the Lord I went forward, and let them all know what my intentions were. I was the youngest communicant, therefore their attention was particularly directed towards me. Do not think, my dear aunt, that because I have done this in my youthful days, for it is a rare thing to see one at *twelve years old* coming forward, that I think I deserve any thing at the hand of my Saviour: No; be that far from me: for the scriptures declare us all to be unworthy of the least notice of our God. I have only done what it was my duty to do, I have nothing to boast of. Ah! I am every way deficient and worthless.

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Our youth, being the children of the church, having attained the years of discretion; if they be sensible of their lost and helpless state by sin, and depend upon the atonement of Christ for pardon and acceptance with God; If they be instructed in the gospel doctrine, and have a competent knowledge to discern the Lord's body; if they desire to renounce their sins, and determine to lead holy and godly lives; may



certainly claim as a privilege the communion of the church ; and participating therein is a pressing duty. The act of the parent thereby becomes their own act. It fixes religious principles, and guards them against a thousand snares in which otherwise they might be entangled.

Our youth are not aware how much they lose, when they despise, and by despising forfeit their religious privileges. I once knew *a boy*, not more than *fourteen* years old, whose mind had been long exercised with religion. He was urged to approach the table of the Lord as a privilege which he might claim. The solemnity of the service arrested his thoughts for many days. Books were recommended to assist him in his preparation ; but he found most assistance from the scripture. He approached with fear and trembling: the words, '*my body broken for you, my blood shed for the remission of sins,*' could not be resisted. They were clear as day. '*I am a sinner, here is a Saviour from sin ; I have felt pain, and may yet feel it ; but Christ suffered for me ; I must die, and the thought of death is terrible to me ; Christ died, and by death destroyed him who had the power of death, that is the devil, and delivered those, who, through fear of death, were all their life time subject to bondage. Thou art such a Saviour as I need ; I believe, help my unbelief ; I resign myself to thy guidance—to thy service—to thy disposal—guide me—employ me—dispose of me.*' It was an humble—a cheerful—an entire resignation of the soul to Christ, who alone has power to sanctify—to invigorate—and to save. The effect was astonishing. He went from the holy table in rapture. Is this to believe ? and is faith so delightful an act ? Does it produce such a change ; give such hopes ; inspire such triumph ? What is this ? I never felt before, as I now feel, I never was so completely happy. For some days his joy was unspeakable ; the world has no such power ; gives no such satisfaction ; never raises such transport. During his future life this happy moment was never forgotten, nor could the conviction be lost, that there is a reality in religion—Come, O come—young men, young women, taste and see that God is good. You never knew what pleasure is, and never shall know, until you participate in the pleasures of a Godly life.

Religion so ennobles and invigorates the mind, that the righteous become bold as lions. I have known even a child pacified, during a thunder storm when panic had seized its

breast, by assurance that it is God who rides upon the wings of the wind, and directs the tempest; that the lightning is the glory flashing from his countenance; that he speaks in the thunder, saying to the righteous, 'my power is your defence; 'these terrors are warnings to the wicked, that they repent 'before they are consumed.'—No season is more favourable to speak to children of the majesty of God; to make them sensible that he has power to defend and power to destroy.

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## LOVE

### THE CHARACTERISTIC OF CHRISTIANS.

“AN apple for you, my son, if you tell me where God is :”—“ I will give you *two*, my father, if you tell me where he is not.” A more impressive answer could not be imagined. The Maker of the World is every where present among his works, and requires the service of his creatures ; let them acknowledge his right to command ; and yield ready obedience. His commands are not grievous : they suit their nature, and present circumstances ; and promote, at all times, and in every situation, their honor, safety and peace.—That this is universally the tendency of *all God's commands*, could easily be proved ; but of *the one* we are to specify, it would insult the understanding to offer proof ; it is self evident, even to those, who every day wantonly offend ; neglecting what they approve, and acting in opposition to what they know is for their benefit.

*Creatures*, whom the Creator has called into existence : *children*, the offspring of one father, it is the command of the Great Creator, it is the will of a Common father that you “ love one another.”

Some commands suit a particular climate, and society in an infant state ; such the ritual prescribed the Jews before the appearance of the Messiah : many parts of that ritual would have been an intolerable grievance beyond the limits of Judea ; and other parts thereof useless and unmeaning after the Messiah had come. But the command to love one another, suits every climate and every state of society ; wherever men are found there ought its obligation to be felt. It has been hitherto, it is now, and shall always continue to be amiable and good for the children of men to live in unity as brethren.

The obligation, under the gospel, to live in friendship, is singular and urgent. The Son of God appeared on earth in human nature, and carried that nature to the highest state of improvement and perfection to heaven. Behold a human being, you behold that nature which Jesus assumed on earth and now wears in heaven ; that nature which he loved and and for whose redemption he died ; that very nature to which he claims kindred, not being ashamed to call men brethren. Can you behold this, and feel no interest in the welfare of

one another?—Where is friendship so enforced as in the school of Christ? Did he not teach this divine science by example and precept? Does he not teach it daily, blessing the nations, and dispensing among them grace and mercy?

The disciples of John the Baptist were known by the austerity of their lives : the disciples of the Pharisees, by their dress and mortified look ; but Christ's disciples are known by the affection which they bear to one another. He is a christian who loves his neighbour as himself : But, is it not enough to love our fellow citizens, or the members of our own church—the men who adopt our creed political, or religious ? Many think so, but they err, and the error is fatal. It confines what in its own nature is diffusive : it poisons the salutary prescription found in God's word, for the recovery and health of a diseased and dying world. The love which christianity enjoins, extends to all who bear the christian name,—nay, to all who possess human nature,—even to those of whom we have had every reason to entertain the most unfavorable opinion. Let not the intention of this principle be misunderstood ; it might otherwise be supposed to assimilate with what is disgusting, or wicked ; this it neither does nor can do, but it leads us to judge of others, and to act towards them, as we would that they should judge of us, and act towards us : It restrains from rash judgment ; or injurious conduct : it disposes us, at all times, to be forbearing, indulgent and kind.

The spirit of the world led a general of the American army, during the revolutionary war, when suspended for his ill conduct from command, to vent his spleen, in expressions of unqualified aversion to the whole race : “ Oh ! were I a *dog*, that I might not call *man*, *brother* ! ” Such are raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame. The late conduct of the commander of one of our frigates, is the conduct which the gospel excites and rewards. His enemy was reduced and offered him his sword. “ I cannot think of taking the sword of a brave man, but I will take your hand.” A christian never sees an enemy in those who are in his power, he only recognizes them as men, and proffers them attention and kindness.

Why are separating names fiercely advocated, and scandal circulated from house to house ? Why is the mind easily irritated ; and resentment long retained, and fatally expressed ? Men do not love one another. Earth is an unfavorable soil, where this plant of Paradise cannot live.



Men are in circumstances which strongly excite and rigorously impose this amiable principle. The infant enters a turbulent world, unknowing and unknown, naked and helpless, incapable of discerning objects or hearing sound; of walking or defending itself, where its first breath would inevitably be its last, without the attention and care of parents and friends. In every stage of life, the aid of others, is still necessary; in a palace or a cottage, alone, cast out from society, abhorred and over-looked; man is the most destitute of God's creation. A changing, turbulent, dangerous state is permitted, that men, requiring the help of men, may be drawn together and bound by the cords of love. A man, callous to the necessities of his fellow men, has renounced humanity, and like the beast of prey, lives to himself alone, indifferent to the distress which his inattention, not to say his cruelty, permits to prevail; but a christian failing in kindness has apostatized from christianity, and extinguished the light intended to illuminate a benighted world.

Let men but love one another; envy would no longer rankle the heart, nor private feuds agitate the community, nor wars desolate the earth. Man, the enemy of man! My soul be humbled at the thought, blush that the fact is incontestible. Govern thine own temper, and use the influence which thou hast as an individual, and all thy weight in society to overcome the rebellious spirit, which degrades thy nature, and leaves no distinction, but what may in the highest degree be claimed by the asp, whose bite is mortal; or by the lion whose jaw devours the prey. Woe to those by whom offences come; on their consciences the misery of the world rests; they shall answer for the blood of thousands; but the peacemaker, is happy in himself, he receives the blessings of society, and shall be ennobled with the glorious title, *a child of God*.

It is not easy to erase hatred from the heart—as soon may an Ethiopian change his skin, and a leopard his spots. *Quash*, an African, was dying; his master told him, *Quash*, you must repent, you have often done wrong. *Massa*, I do repent. But *Quash*, you hate *Cæsar*, you must forgive him. *Cæsar* a bad man, *massa*, very bad man—I forgive him! no! never! Then *Quash*, God will not forgive you. Ah! is that so; it is hard—well *massa*, since it is so, mind if *Quash* dies, *Quash* forgives *Cæsar*, but if *Quash* lives---let *Cæsar* take care of himself.

The following beautiful little poem is said by Percy to have been a favourite song with king Charles the second.

### DEATH'S FINAL CONQUEST.

The glories of our blood and state  
 Are shadows, not substantial things;  
 There is no armour against fate;  
 Death lays his icy hand on kings:  
     Sceptre and crown  
     Must tumble down,  
 And in the dust be equal made  
 With the poor crooked scythe & spade.

Some men with swords may reap the  
     field,  
     And plant fresh laurels where they  
     kill;  
 But their strong nerves at last must  
     yield,  
     They tame but one another still.  
     Early or late  
     They stoop to fate,  
 And must give up their murmuring  
     breath,  
 When they pale captives creep to death.

The garlands wither on your brow,  
     Then boast no more your mighty  
     deeds;  
 Upon death's purple altar now  
     See where the victor victim bleeds.  
     All heads must come  
     To the cold tomb;  
 Only the actions of the just  
 Smell sweet and blossom in the dust.



## CONVERSION OF A JEW.

*Account of the conversion of Abraham Wertheim, a Jew, now Julius Edward. Written by himself in German, and translated by the Rev. Mr. Ramfller.*

If any wish to learn how the Lord cares for the destitute, has mercy upon his straying sheep, and conducts them to his flock; how he grants power and courage to them that are lost, to come to the knowledge and possession of truth, read the brief memoir of my life, and praise the Lord with me, for giving grace to sinners.

Born of poor parents at Breslau, even in my childhood, I felt no greater desire for any object than for knowing and worshipping the true God. With rapture my mother embraced me, when I could read and understand the Talmud in the sixth year of my life; and eminent Rabbies assured her, that I should become a learned and pious man. I do not enlarge upon the indigent circumstances in which I spent my early youth, nor upon the manner in which I earned a scanty pittance by singing in the synagogue; but only briefly state, that I should think lightly of what I then suffered, if my desire to come to the knowledge of the Christian religion, and to grow in this knowledge, could but be satisfied. I became acquainted in my eleventh year with several truths of christianity, by means of one Schubert, a Roman Catholic, to whom my mother frequently sent me. This man and his whole family were very kind to me, and requested me to visit them often, which I did with pleasure. Schubert was a pious man, once read, in my presence, the account of the miracles which Jesus did, when his disciples were exposed to great danger on the sea, from Matt. xiv. 22, 23. How great was my astonishment when I heard this! I begged him urgently, to tell me if Jesus had really done this. He replied, that the Holy Scriptures contained truth without any mixture of error. I immediately went home, and related to my mother what I had heard; but she refuted me with such powerful arguments, viz. a large cudgel, that I felt the pain for a considerable time; whilst she added, "Rather kill thee than educate thee to be a Goi,"—(Gentile.) I was prohibited all intercourse with christians, and every question concerning

Christ was returned with blows. This severity, however, only served to make me more eager in my enquiries after truth. At length I succeeded, in escaping my mother's vigilance, and heard a christian sermon. The preacher discoursed on the miracle of five thousand men being fed with a few loaves, from John vi. 1—15. I am unable to express, what sensations pervaded me, when I heard of another miracle of Jesus : those who consider it a duty to reflect on the wonders of Omnipotence can enter into my feelings. Now I formed a firm resolution to worship him who had done those miracles. With this determination I met my mother with this address ;—" *Tole*," (Jesus the crucified) "is God, for he hath done what God alone can do." My mother scarcely suffered me to finish these words, but, after severely beating me, expelled me from her house. Now I took refuge with my friend Schubert ; but my pleasant abode with him lasted but one day only, for I was compelled to go with my step-father to see a Jewess, who took me into her house. This Jewess, notwithstanding her strict inspection, being unable to prevent me from going to church on Sundays ; it was determined to send me to Lissa in Poland, where some relatives of my mother resided. I gladly agreed to this plan, in hopes of having better opportunities there for the accomplishment of my desire ; but my situation in Lissa soon became very gloomy. I was watched with the greatest severity ; wherever I went, I met with a Jew ; and no sooner did I make an acquaintance with a christian, and go with him to church, than it was discovered and betrayed. I lost the support which I had procured by singing in the synagogue, was exposed to general contempt, was cruelly persecuted, and provided with the meanest food, so that my constitution at length was seriously injured. When the Jews perceived that my life was endangered, they sent me back to my mother at Breslau. Her maternal feeling was touched, she cried for me with tenderness, but made me promise that I would think no more about the *Tole*. After my recovery I entreated my mother to let me learn to read and to write the German language. Her suspicions of my religious sentiments not being removed, she sent me again from her house, but some kind people gave me a charitable reception. By means of their kindness I was instructed in reading and writing German, in my fifteenth year ; and now it was my greatest desire to have a New-Testament to read. In one of my solitary walks I got acquainted with Mr.



Rotisch, a turner by trade," and begged him to give me a New-Testament.—He encouraged me to visit him, shewed me much friendship, gave me considerable support, and entrusted his daughter to me for teaching her to write. Now a bright sun seemed to rise for me, but my comforts were of short duration. My mother discovered my proceedings, received me again into her house, and hoped to force me by hunger and blows, but in vain. I declared boldly to her, that no torture that could be inflicted on me, could prevent me from becoming a christian. The feast of atonement arrived; I escaped from the synagogue, and entered a Roman Catholic church, where I beheld the priest ascend to the altar, with solemn steps, and heard him pronounce the blessing on the kneeling multitude, while the burning wax-candles and the awful stillness increased the solemnity of the scene. Oh how I was struck with the ceremonial of this service! I exclaimed, It must be the Messiah whom they worship, and now the spirit of God seemed to whisper to me, Courage, young man, follow my call; I will redeem thee from thy sins, I will strengthen thee; look to Jesus crucified, and the work of thy conversion will be accomplished. In extacies I went home, and declared frankly, "The time is come, that I must be converted to Jesus: I can withstand the power of truth no longer: for he has said, Whoso confesseth me before men, him will I also confess before my Father." Now some Jews seized me, and after beating me severely, threw me down the stairs. I repaired to Rotisch, who received me into his house; and now I attended zealously to the great business of my conversion. I expressed, in writing, my motives for embracing christianity, and Mr. Rotisch took my writing to a Catholic priest, of the name of Burgund. When this venerable man put the question to me, Why I preferred the Roman Catholic church? I replied, Because I supposed the most ancient church must be the most genuine. He smiled and said, "If you think so, adopt the Roman Catholic faith; but I think, that in the present state of Catholicism the truth is obscured." I supposed that he said this merely to try me, whether I should steadfastly continue in my determination. My surprise therefore, was great, when this Mr. Burgund, three years after, became a protestant himself, and is now employed as director of a seminary near Königsberg, in Prussia. After previous instructions in the truth of christianity, I had the favour, in the 17th year of my age, June 22, 1801, to be added by holy

baptism to the christian church. Now I hoped to live quietly and happily; but a greater portion of suffering was still in store for me. I was like a cast-away, persecuted by my mother, my relations and many other Jews, who sought my death, being wholly disappointed in their expectation of making me a Rabbi. I was spit upon, falsely accused of crimes, followed in lonely places, frequently beaten, in short, my life was made as miserable as possible. But how trifling were my sufferings, compared with those that Jesus endured for me! Jesus was my consolation and my hope, during many days when I had not a morsel of bread to satisfy my hunger. I suffered with resignation, to shew to the world, that the words which Jesus spoke, when on earth,—“He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me: if any man will follow me, let him deny himself and take up his cross,”—were more dear to me than all the treasures of the world. Nor did he forsake me in my distress; often, when I was destitute of every necessary of life, and without prospect of relief, he raised kind friends to me; and by means of such friends, I, at length, was enabled to enter upon a course of studies. My life was like a boat, tossed by a storm, on the open sea, from one cliff to another, until a skilful pilot guides it into the harbour. But, however uneasy my outward situation, my spirit, being determined upon the service of the Lord, was not offended thereby. At length, the long wished for day arrived, when I entered into the theological class. Whatever I had learned hitherto, was only the means for the attainment of my main design. Now I studied the history of the christian church.—What came to my knowledge then! What liberties have men in different ages taken with the word of God? How has it been perverted by men, so that from the tenth to the sixteenth century, it was sunk from the height of truth to the lowest degree of superstition! But how excellent was the work of Luther, in restoring the knowledge of pure and divine truth in Christendom! I read reflected, and comprehended that the *form* of christianity is not the substance: that the word of truth must be established, not by human, but by divine authority; and that the kingdom of Christ consists not in celebrating mass, holding possessions, &c. but in something infinitely more noble; the sacraments being only means of grace, to be observed according to the manner and purpose of their institution.

This change in my sentiments diminished my courage,



from day to day, for becoming a preacher of the word of God, not in conformity with human opinions, but according to the will of God.—The time approached, when I was to enter the higher class : I hesitated. Evil reports were spread concerning me, because I sprinkled my body no more with consecrated water when entering the church, did not kneel during mass, &c. The minister who had baptised me, conversed with me on the subject, and I frankly declared to him that I wished to be a genuine Catholic, but could not be a Roman Catholic ; and that I desired once for all to proclaim the pure doctrines of the gospel, in which nothing occurred of such ceremonies and human appointments. This open declaration deprived me of the favor of men ; I lost my stipend, and the support which I had hitherto obtained by giving instruction in several sciences, in a Roman Catholic family. My outward situation became once more exceedingly heavy. At length, in the year 1811, the Protestant University was removed, from Frankfort on the Oder, to Breslau. My courage revived ; but a new struggle took place in my mind. What shall I do, that I may once teach the pure word of God ? Will not the world condemn me as a changeable man, who, from sinister motives, renounces one profession for another ? What will your former benefactors think, whom you evidently treat with ingratitude ? But a voice within said, —Fear not ; tread on in the way of truth with a firm step—With these sentiments, I frequented the lectures of some Protestant professors ; with a view to be still more established in my conviction, before I ventured publicly to avow myself a Protestant. In the year 1812, I had courage and resolution to enter my name as a Protestant student of divinity. Now my only desire, and the mark towards which I press, is to become a witness of the saving doctrines of the Gospel : I had the favor to deliver the first public testimony to my Saviour, in the church to a numerous auditory.

Thus may I always walk in the ways of the Lord, and speak and act according to his mind. May nothing change my resolution ! Though still more earthly sufferings should be reserved for me, though severe cares should weigh me down ; if I am but guided by my Saviour's hand, I can cheerfully proceed on my pilgrimage.

### THE FEMALE ONESIMUS SOCIETY.

THIS society had its origin in a high state of excitement, on the all important subject of religion, apparent among many of our youth. It led them to meet often together. That their impressions might not wear off, they were anxious to associate on some common principles. What appeared most likely to be lasting was the *union of piety and morality*, which mutually excite and strengthen each other, and cannot be separated.

The name under which the society associates is of Greek origin, signifying *to profit*, expressive of their desire to receive advantage individually from such an association, and to be advantageous to others.

All the members are divided into committees to solicit donations, and to visit the poor.

They meet once a week to make garments for those who are destitute.

Whilst at work readers are appointed, to read select passages from the Old and the New Testament, with Orton's and Doddridge's commentary.

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THE  
MONTHLY VISITANT;

OR

Something Old.

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"NO MAN HAVING DRUNK OLD WINE, STRAIGHTWAY  
DESIRETH NEW; FOR HE SAITH, THE OLD IS  
BETTER."

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